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SUBJECT: Secretary Abraham's May 23 Bilateral Meeting
with Dutch Economics Minister Brinkhorst

1. Summary: Energy Secretary Abraham held a May 23 luncheon discussion with Dutch Economics Minister Brinkhorst on the margins of the International Energy Forum meeting in Amsterdam. They agreed to explore the possibilities for increased U.S.-EU collaboration on energy technologies and that the IEA focus the bulk of its work on oil and gas, with possibly a new emphasis on promoting development of a world market for natural gas. The Secretary rebuffed Brinkhorst's suggestion that the U.S. reconsider its sanctions against Iran noting serious non-proliferation concerns. The Secretary agreed that close cooperation between oil consumers and producers was useful but noted that to receive support in the long-term, the IEF would have to continue to deliver significant results. Secretary Abraham's party did not clear this cable. End Summary.

Future of the International Energy Forum

2. Brinkhorst expressed appreciation for U.S. support (including financial) for the IEF and noted the political importance of having a framework for producer-consumer dialogue. He thought that producer-consumer cooperation had helped ensure the conflict in Iraq did not result in a severe oil shock. The Secretary agreed that close producer-consumer cooperation had kept prices from skyrocketing but thought that U.S. support for institutionalized producer-consumer dialogue through the IEF depends on whether the IEF can deliver significant results.

Iran

3. Brinkhorst claimed that the U.S. and EU share serious concerns regarding the nature of the Iranian regime. He thought, however, that isolating Iran would not produce more responsible Iranian behavior and was not warranted by the size of the potential Iranian threat. Brinkhorst asked that the U.S. reconsider its sanctions against Iran claiming that their removal would support Iran's efforts in moving closer to the West and becoming a more robust partner in assuring the security of world oil supplies. The Secretary pointed out serious U.S. non-proliferation concerns with regards to Iran and declared that Iran cannot be allowed to develop the enrichment capability that would allow it to develop nuclear weapons. Brinkhorst reassured the Secretary that the U.S. and EU disagreed only on tactics.

Dutch EU Presidency

4. The Secretary noted the upcoming (7/04-12/-4) Dutch EU presidency and the excellent existing transatlantic cooperation on energy technology, especially hydrogen. He said that the U.S. would like to explore whether this cooperation could be expanded to include additional clean energy technologies. Brinkhorst enthusiastically supported this idea.

International Energy Agency

5. Brinkhorst voiced concern over the wide scope of IEA activities and stressed the need for more focus. The Secretary stated the IEA should maintain a primary focus

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on oil and gas and thought the organization could be useful in creating an enabling environment for development of a world natural gas marketplace. Brinkhorst agreed and suggested that development of the world gas market might also be a subject for U.S.-EU discussion.

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